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423 435 The value of farm land is startlingly low, although accurate figures on either the amount of farm land in the *municipio* or the amount owned by any individual were impossible to secure. The tax rolls of the town are an inadequate guide. A very large number of lands are not listed and in many cases the area given is much smaller than actual size. A number of farmers admitted this fact. The tax rolls show only 303 farmers, although most men in town own some land. The total parcels listed number 759 with a total area of 1,943½ hectares (a hectare is 2.47 acres) with a value of $259,620. Community-owned lands are listed as 1,667 hectares valued at $100,000. This would total slightly less than 9,000 acres, or about 14 square miles. This is probably less than half the total area of Cherán.

The average holding according to the tax rolls is 2.5 pieces of land, totaling 6.41 hectares valued at $856.86. This average is misleading, however, possibly through an error on the part of the tax collector's office staff, or perhaps because a few large landowners hold high-priced lands. From $80 to $100 per hectare is the most common valuation. An average of one page of the tax roll listing 58 farmers gave 2.62 plots per person, averaging 5.1 hectares valued at $377.07 or $74 a hectare. The largest holding on this page was 32 hectares, valued at $2,560; the smallest was one-half a hectare, valued at $50. Bearing in mind that these figures represent taxable values, actual values probably average around $150 a hectare.

Data from individuals probably are even more unreliable, yet show surprising uniformity. The average value is $77.08 per hectare, Estimates from six landowners are as follows:

Area (hectares)	*Value*
2	$140
4	350
16	1,280
½	40
14	1,080
8	640
44½	$3,530

The surprising closeness of owner evaluations to the average assessed values suggests that farmers are well aware of the latter. Information from more individuals is desirable but [156] is difficult to obtain. Even good friends nor-

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[156] mally either refuse information or obviously lie about the size and value of their holdings. The only further evidence available on this point is an actual sale observed in which a price of $40 was paid for about one-half hectare of wheat land. This piece was already planted to wheat and would yield about 2 *cargas*. On the other hand, $400 was being asked for a hectare of the best maize land.

Residential lands almost always include a garden plot as well as a building site. Only in the center of town is this not true. Prices of residential land, however, vary sharply with location and, to a lesser extent, with the depth of the lot and the quality of soil. In the center of town shallow lots may be valued at as much as $25 a meter frontage, while on the outskirts the price may be as low as $10 a meter. The garden plot produces blue maize, vegetables, fruit, and sometimes wheat. Probably a number of persons who were said to own land in Cherán actually own only a large residential plot, but this point was not investigated.

Forest lands are owned by the community. They serve as the source of firewood, lumber, and other forest products such as shakes and charcoal, and provide grazing for livestock; as sources of game or wild vegetable products their value is negligible.

The use of forest lands formerly was open to all who paid a small fee to aid the community to pay the Federal taxes on the land. Persons using the forest only for firewood paid less than did charcoal burners, lumbermen, or shakemakers. In recent years a permit from the Federal Department of Forestry has been required for any but household use, and efforts were being made to limit rights to members of a cooperative organization.

LABOR

The sex division of labor in Cherán bars women from most productive pursuits. Women's activities conform closely to the ideals laid down recently by a notorious central European —children, kitchen, and church. Women perform all the household duties, such as cooking, sweeping, and washing, care for the children, make most of the clothes, carry water (but not firewood unless they have no close male relatives), and take food to their men at work.